

## JOHN HENNINGER REAGAN

John H. Reagan, the famous Texan, died at Palestine, Texas, March 6. An interesting review of Judge Reagan's important career was written for the Chicago Record-Herald by Henry Barrett Chamberlain. Mr. Chamberlain says:

"Tall and rugged, every line of his face indicating indomitable will, there stood upon the western bank of the Red river a stalwart young fellow of twenty years. In his hand a small bundle tied in a blue handkerchief—his entire wardrobe. In his pocket a \$10 bill issued by the bank of Holly Springs, Miss.—his entire fortune. His face was toward the setting sun and he looked Texasward.

"It was the afternoon of Mary 29, 1839, and as the young man looked he realized that in all of the great land before him there was none to whom he might look for aid. His future was his alone. About him on every side were the foes of the frontiersman, but not for a moment did his feet falter; not for a moment did his heart fail. He was strong with the strength of one who knows himself, and without fear he took up his journey into a strange land.

"Three score and six years after, the young man, now in his six and eightieth year, had closed a marvelous career. In his life he had served under three flags, had honored and been honored by the people in whose cause he was as valiant in war as he was wise in peace, and finally, in the fullness of years and achievement, passed to his eternal rest.

"Born in Sevier county, Tennessee, Oct. 8, 1818, and dying at his home at Palestine, Texas, yesterday, the activities of John Henninger Reagan furnish an inspiration to all Americans. In the Republic of Texas he fought in many campaigns against the Indians. In the state of Texas he served the commonwealth as colonel of its militia, justice of the peace, sat in its legislature and upon the bench. Then he went to congress and was counted one of the ablest members of the house, which he left in 1861 because he believed it his duty to cast his fortunes with the confederacy.

"Under the stars and bars his was high political preferment. First Postmaster general of the confederate states of America, he relinquished that post to become secretary of its treasury, devoting his energies and his fortune to a cause he loved and fondly hoped might prevail. But when the fortunes of war decreed that the southland should not depart from the union, and while a prisoner of war, this man undertook the work of calming sectional hatred, and finally returned to his people to advocate conciliation and unity.

"Ripe in experience, he again became a legislator of the nation, serving as a senator from 1887 until 1891, fathering the 'Reagan interstate commerce law,' which as afterward amended by Senator Cullom of Illinois became the law which is now in force.

"The life of Judge Reagan links the history of the old with that of the new. His work was strenuous, history-making. For more than sixty-five years and during the greater part of this period he was in the political arena. He remembered the great tariff debate of 1832, which resulted in the passage of the nullification act by South Carolina. He could recall the fight made by Andrew Jackson against the United States bank. In Chicago, where of recent years he delighted to pass his summer holiday, he would tell of the scenes and incidents that made the

'Tippecanoe and Tyler too' campaign so memorable.

"Those who knew the old gentleman when he passed his leisure time in this city can not forget the tall, straight figure, gracefully bearing its four score years, the great mane of silvery-gray hair, the eye, black as night and piercing as an eagle's, the voice soft as a woman's and the strong white hands which gripped so firmly and yet so gently, and the smile which captivated old and young alike as the great Texan told of defeats and victories or, half in reverie, recalled the stirring things treasured in his memory.

"As a young man he was thrilled by the cry, 'Remember the Alamo,' and it may be said that he never ceased to be inspired by Sam Houston's injunction. He saw the Republic of Texas set its star in the flag of the union. He saw the great west and southwest won into the circle of civilization. He felt that the war clouds were forming as early as 1840, and he witnessed the compromise of ten years later. By him the 'Dred Scott' decision was heard as it came fresh from the lips of Taney, and 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' was read and given his careful thought almost the moment it came from the press. Gifted with capacity and foresight, he understood the significance of events.

"When the Butler-Brooks-Sumner incident occurred in the senate Judge Reagan was a member of congress. His associates were the great men of the period. 1840-1860. Clay, Calhoun, Webster, Benton, Houston, Breckinridge, Douglas, Cass—these he knew intimately. Upon the southern states he saw and part or this he was.

"He was with Jefferson Davis at Montgomery and at Richmond. He saw the confederacy rise and he saw it fall. He met and chatted with Lee and Jackson and Stuart and Johnston and Beauregard and Gordon. He wore the gray when McDowell was routed at the first Manassas, and he was wearing it when the great Lee, on that April morning in 1865, said to the heroes of the army of Virginia:

"Men: We have fought through this war together. I have done the best I could for you. My heart is too full to say more."

"The uniform of gray was worn by Reagan after that. He still wore it when, with Jefferson Davis, he started on that fateful ride to the southward from Richmond.

"Through the period of reconstruction he passed. And he lived to rejoice that the men who plundered the south in her poverty, oppressed her in her weakness and mocked at her in her calamity were cast down. Always true to his people, he was one of the great reconstructionists. In the times of depression, of failure, of discouragement, he turned his face toward the morning, he looked to the dawn of a new and better day. Shoulder to shoulder he stood with the great men who emancipated and redeemed the land he loved best of all.

"In a talk with a friend some time before his death Judge Reagan said:

"I am hoping to have time to write a little something on a subject very near and dear to me. I am not fighting the war over again. God forbid that I should say one word to revive the dying embers of passion and prejudice. What I would do and what I would have all true southerners do is to preserve the true, loyal spirit of the con-

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